



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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**Office of Engineering and Technology Seeks Public Comments on
Recognizing Laboratory Accreditation Bureau's Application for
Recognition as a Laboratory Accreditation Body**

ET Docket No. 13-208

Comments Date: September 23, 2013
Reply Comments Date: October 7, 2013

Laboratory Accreditation Bureau (LAB) has submitted a request with the Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) to be recognized by the Commission as an accreditation body that performs accreditation of test laboratories under the Commission's rules.¹ LAB seeks to be an accreditation body for laboratories testing equipment for authorization under the Commission's Declaration of Conformity (DoC) and Certification programs in Parts 2, 15 and 18 of the Commission's rules.²

Section 2.948(d) of the Commission's rules sets forth the requirements for accreditation bodies and for test laboratories.³ An entity seeking to be recognized by the Commission as an accreditation body for test laboratories must demonstrate that it complies with applicable International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards for recognizing such bodies and that it is competent in assessing test laboratories to perform measurements in support of the applicable FCC technical regulations. The current ISO/IEC standard used for recognizing accreditation bodies is ISO/IEC 17011, *Conformity assessment — General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*.⁴ Accreditation of test laboratories pursuant to Section 2.948(d) is to be based on ISO/IEC standard 17025, *General requirements for the competence of testing*

¹ On July 10, 2012 Laboratory Accreditation Bureau (LAB) submitted documentation in support of their request with the OET. Information provided by LAB in support of its request has been included in this docket file.

² See 47 C.F.R. § 0.241(f) (delegating authority to the Chief, OET to make determinations regarding the acceptability of individual accrediting organizations and to enter into agreements with them to perform accreditation of test laboratories under the rules); Amendment of Parts 2 and 15 of the Commission's Rules to Deregulate the Equipment Authorization Requirements for Digital Devices, ET Docket No. 95-19, *Report and Order*, 11 FCC Rcd 17915, 17932 para. 38 (1996).

³ 47 C.F.R. § 2.948(d).

⁴ ISO/IEC 17011 (2004) has replaced ISO/IEC 58, *Calibration and Testing Laboratory Accreditation Systems — General Requirements for Operation and Recognition* which is specified in Section 2.948(d).

and calibration laboratories, and on the FCC requirements. It is the responsibility of the accreditation body to review the qualifications of a test laboratory's test personnel, management systems, record keeping and reporting practices; to send recognized experts to observe testing at the laboratory; and to verify the testing laboratory's competence to perform tests in accordance with FCC-related measurement procedures.

OET has provided additional guidance on the type of information that an applicant who desires to be recognized by the Commission as a laboratory accreditation body should provide in support of its application⁵ The following types of information would provide the "best evidence" of an applicant's credentials and qualifications to perform accreditation of laboratories that test equipment to Commission requirements, consistent with the requirements of Section 2.948(d) of the Commission's rules for accreditation bodies and for test laboratories:

1. Successful completion of a ISO/IEC 17011 peer review, such as being a signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) or other equivalent laboratory accreditation agreement;⁶
2. Experience with the accreditation of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), radio and telecom testing laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025. This can be demonstrated by having OET staff participate in a witness audit of the accreditation body performing an assessment of an EMC/Radio/Telecom testing laboratory; or by having OET staff review the report generated by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) laboratory accreditation evaluation program conducted to support the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment.⁷ An applicant that offers other evidence has the burden of demonstrating that the information would enable OET to evaluate its experience with the accreditation of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), radio and telecom testing laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025.
3. Accreditation personnel/assessors with specific technical experience on the Commission equipment authorization rules and requirements; and
4. Procedures and policies developed for the accreditation of testing laboratories for FCC equipment authorization programs.

Information provided by LAB in support of its request has been included in the docket file. Additional information regarding LAB may be found on its website or by contacting it directly.

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⁵ See Office of Engineering and Technology Provides Guidance on the Recognition of Laboratory Accreditation Bodies and Recognizes ACLASS as an Accreditation Body, ET Docket No. 09-161, *Public Notice* (2010); Office of Engineering and Technology Seeks Public Comments on Qualifying Information for Recognizing Laboratory Accreditation Bodies and ACLASS Application for Recognition, ET Docket No. 09-161, *Public Notice* (2009).

⁶ The ILAC Arrangement builds upon existing or developing regional arrangements established around the world. The European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA), the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) and the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) are examples of current ILAC-recognized regions with acceptable mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) and evaluation procedures. See ILAC Arrangement at <http://www.ilac.org/ilacarrangement.html>.

⁷ Domestic laboratory accreditation bodies that successfully complete the NIST evaluation program are listed by NIST as acceptable for use by domestic laboratories seeking to be designated to foreign MRA partner economies.

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OET invites comment on LAB's application to be recognized as an accreditation body of test laboratories under the Commission's rules. In particular, we invite comment on the qualifications and capabilities of LAB to accredit test laboratories that perform testing for EMC, radio, and telecommunications requirements under the Commission's rules, and whether LAB meets the minimum set of requirements described above.

Interested parties may file comments no later than September 23, 2013. Reply comments are due no later than October 7, 2013. All filings should reference ET Docket No. 13-208.

Comments. Pursuant to sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs2/>
- Paper Filers: Parties that choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
 - All hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary must be delivered to FCC Headquarters at 445 12th St., SW, Room TW-A325, Washington, DC 20554. The filing hours are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes must be disposed of before entering the building.
 - Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.
 - U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554.

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For more information or questions pertaining to this document, please contact George Tannahill at (301) 362-3026, george.tannahill@fcc.gov.

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